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The National Association of Forest Service Retirees (NAFSR) thanks you for your recent involvement and support to save the Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers from transfers away from a conservation mission or outright closure.

We believe the reversal of this decision was the right choice for several reasons. Forest Service leadership in carrying out the Job Corps program as a partner of the Department of Labor has been a cornerstone of the program's success over the last five decades. This success is especially important because of the focus on "conservation".

The importance of these centers is based on their special rural locations and communities and the ability to connect students with the outdoors. Involving them in conservation work and training including silviculture and fire management is crucial.

The loss of these centers would be another blow to rural America not only from economic losses related to employment and community stability, but also because of the loss of the training opportunity for at risk youth in these areas. There would most certainly be many unintended consequences regarding administrative facilities, property, budget, and investments that have been developed over the past fifty years that would interfere with current mission priorities.

NAFSR is a national nonprofit membership organization that represents thousands of Forest Service retirees who are dedicated to sustaining the heritage of caring for the National Forests and Grasslands, partnering with the Forest Service, and helping understand and adapt to today's and tomorrow's challenges.

Thank you again for understanding the importance of Job Corps and its critical connection to the Forest Service and conservation. As we look to the future, the expanded management of America's forests remains critical to help reduce the size and intensity of wildfires. As you know, this is the natural resource conservation issue of our time. To make this happen we need your help. The decision to sustain the 25 Job Corps Conservation Centers within the leadership of the USDA Forest Service is an important piece of this larger goal.

Sincerely,

James L. Caswell

James L. Caswell, Chair
National Association of Forest Service Retirees